

# Exploring the Suppression of Intellectual Humility in Honor Cultures

FSU

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## INTRODUCTION

Intellectual humility (IH)—the ability to recognize one’s knowledge limits and remain open to new information—is vital for critical thinking and decision-making (Porter et al., 2023). In honor cultures, where reputation is highly valued, individuals may be more defensive and less receptive to feedback, especially when facing criticism or failure (Travaglino et al., 2024). Fear of failure and insecurity can further reduce IH by triggering identity-protective responses (Porter et al., 2023). This study examines how cultural values beyond individualism and collectivism influence IH and identifies factors that foster or hinder it.

## OBJECTIVES

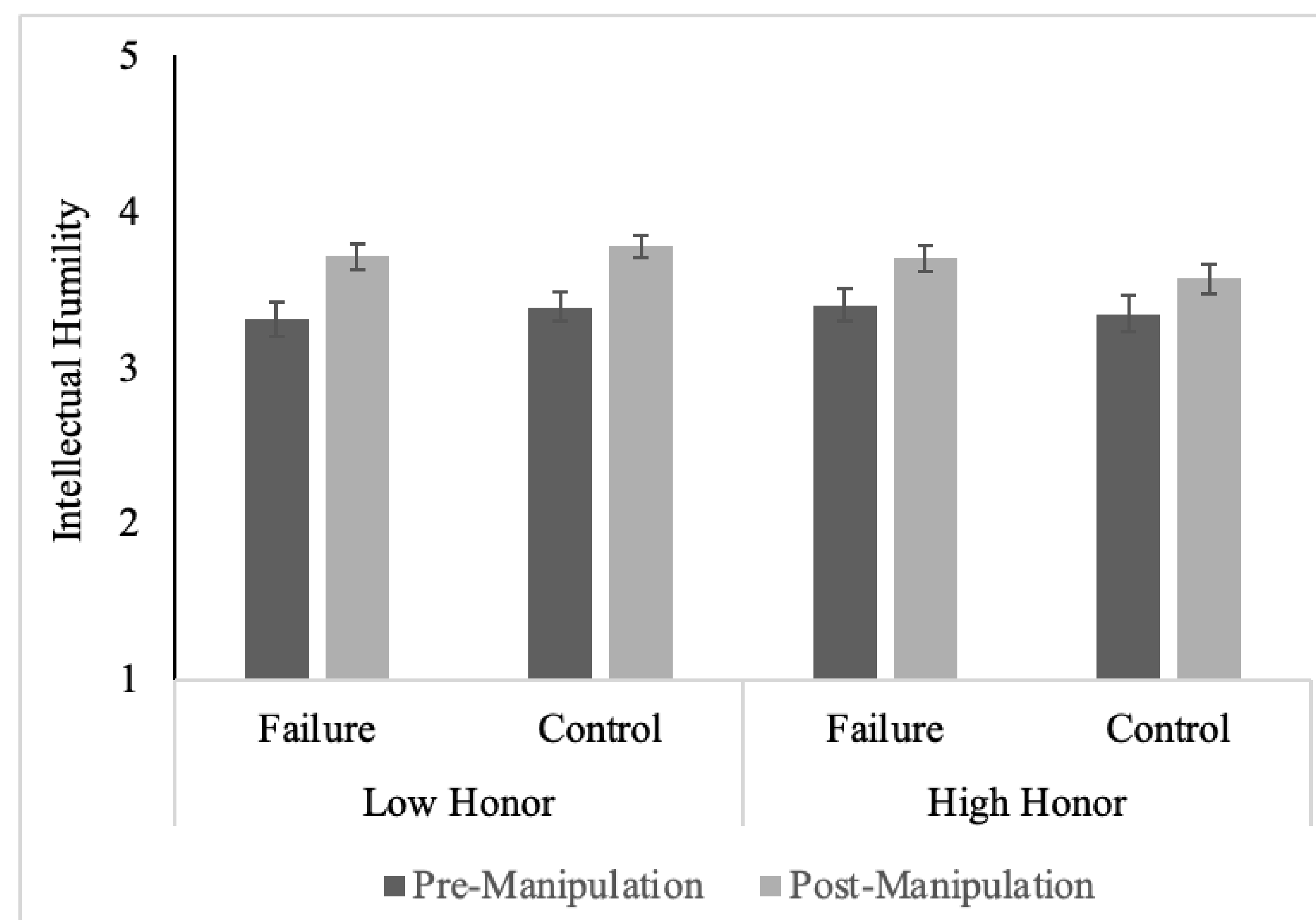
- **Research Question:** How does fear of failure and feelings of insecurity influence intellectual humility in individuals from honor cultures, particularly in response to criticism or perceived failure?
- **Hypothesis 1:** Participants with high honor values who are exposed to the failure condition, designed to evoke insecurity, will exhibit a significant decrease in IH compared to other participants.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Insecurity will act as a mediator between cultural background and IH, with higher levels of insecurity leading to lower IH scores.

## METHODS

- **Pre-Manipulation (Online Survey)** – Intellectual Humility (IH), State-Trait Anxiety (STAI), and Honor, Dignity, and Face scales.
- **Manipulation (In-Person)** – Participants are randomly assigned to a Critical Condition (reflecting on insecurity/family disappointment) or Control Condition (neutral family interaction). Emotional impact is measured using Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNES) and STAI.
- **Post-Manipulation (In-Person)** – IH is reassessed, and an alternative IH writing task reflecting on a conflict with a friend.

## RESULTS

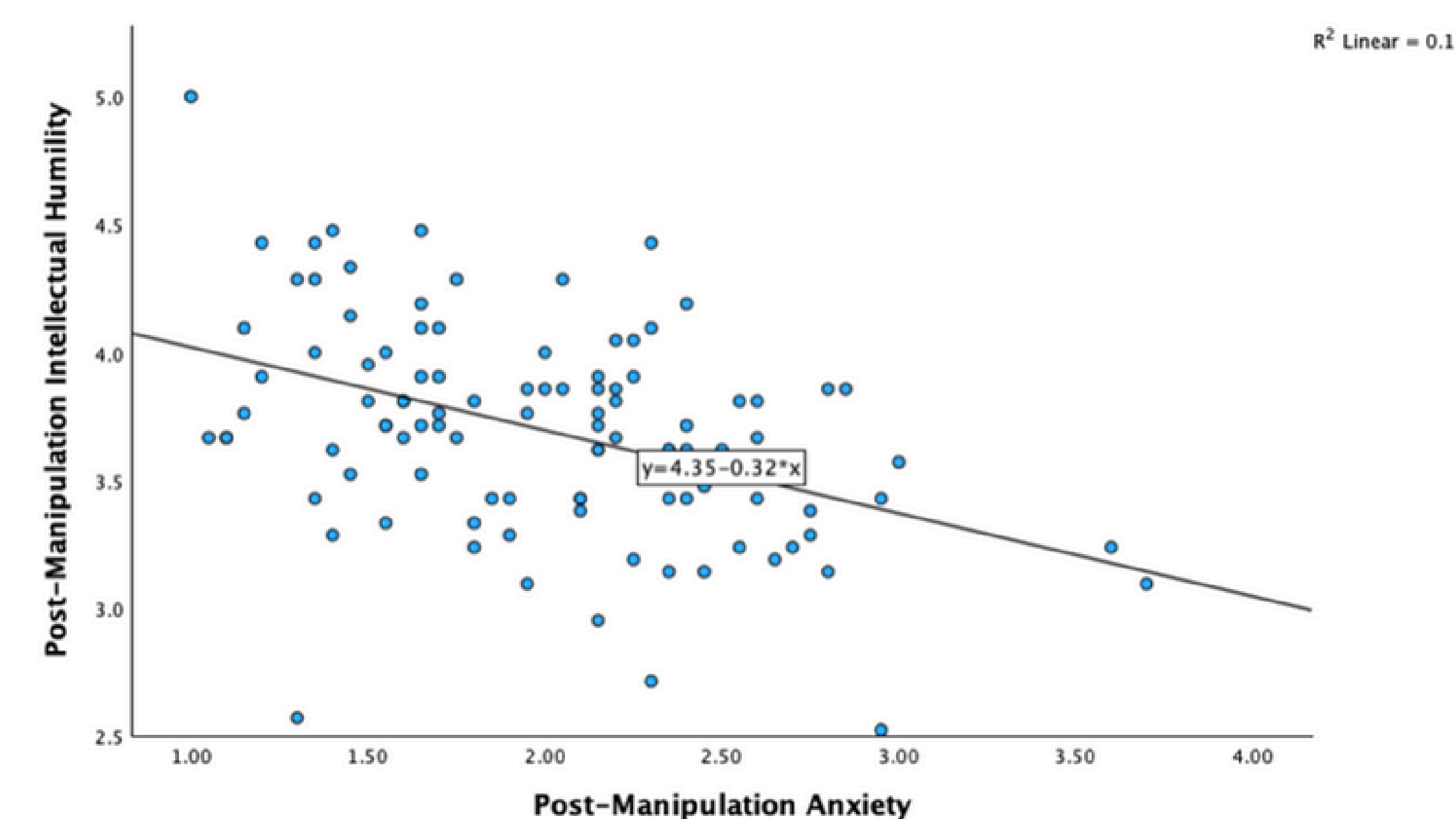
### *The Relationship Between Failure Reflection, Honor Values and Intellectual Humility*



*Pre-Post Manipulation Main Effect:*

$$F(1, 97) = 26.33, p < .001$$

### *The Relationship Between Post-Manipulation Anxiety and Intellectual Humility*



$$r(102) = -.389, p < .001$$

## DISCUSSION

We observed an overall increase in IH from pre- to post-manipulation. Participants in both the critical (failure) and control conditions reported higher IH after completing the reflection exercise. The observed negative correlation between anxiety and IH suggests a potential mechanism: when individuals become more focused on their own perceived inadequacies, they may be less willing to acknowledge their intellectual fallibility. Future research could explore interventions to mitigate these effects, such as self-affirmation techniques that reduce defensiveness and promote intellectual openness even after experiencing failure.

## REFERENCES

- Porter, T., Elnakouri, A., Meyers, E. A., Shibayama, T., Jayawickreme, E., & Grossmann, I. (2022). Predictors and consequences of intellectual humility. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 1(9), 524–536. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-022-00081-9>
- Travaglino, G. A., Friehs, M., Kotzur, P. F., & Abrams, D. (2024). Honor values as identity content: Evidence from a Three-Wave Longitudinal study. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 55(3), 278–291. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00220221241230959>